

## Message Text

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67

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

EB-07 AID-05 OIC-02 EUR-12 /091 W

----- 119848

R 190929Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2174

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

USMISSION GENEVA

USDEL JEC PARIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 1122

E.O. 11652: XGDS

TAGS: PFOR, PDIP, WMO, SN

SUBJ: SINGAPORE AND PRG ISSUE

REFS: A. STATE 057279; B. STATE 010509; C. SINGAPORE 0429 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: IN ABSENCE FOREIGN MINISTER RAJARATNAM, I REVIEWED IN DETAIL OUR VIEWS ON PRG ISSUE IN CONNECTION WMO CONFERENCE WITH PERMANENT SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, GEORGE BOGAARS. HE PROMISED TO CONVEY STRENGTH AND SUBSTANCE OF OUR VIEWS TO ACTING MINISTER WHO WILL PRESENT ISSUE TO CABINET PROBABLY TOMORROW. PROSPECT IS THAT GOS WILL ABSTAIN OR NOT VOTE. END SUMMARY.

2. SINCE FOREIGN MINISTER RAJARATNAM IS IN CHINA AND WILL NOT RETURN UNTIL MARCH 18 SOUGHT APPOINTMENT WITH ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER BARKER TO CARRY OUT INSTRUCTIONS REF A. BARKER, WHO IS WEARING THREE MINISTERIAL HATS AND MUST ATTEND DAY-LONG SESSIONS OF PARLIAMENT, WHICH IS NOW SITTING, ASKED THAT I SSL PERMANENT  
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SECRETARY BOGAARS WHO, IN ANY CASE, IS MORE FAMILIAR WITH PRG ISSUE.

3. ALTHOUGH I HAD PREVIOUSLY DISCUSSED PRG ISSUE WITH BOGAARS SEVERAL TIMES, I REVIEWED ALL THE ARGUMENTS SET FORTH REF B ON THIS MATTER AND GAVE HIM AN INFORMAL SUMMARY MEMORANDUM. I EXPLAINED WE HAD HAD INDICATIONS THAT SINGAPORE MIGHT ABSTAIN OR NOT VOTE ON QUESTION OF PRG ATTENDANCE AT WMO CONFERENCE -- IN FACT ONE OF THOSE INDICATIONS HAD COME FROM BOGAARS HIMSELF -- AND ASKED IF SINGAPORE HAD CHANGED ITS ATTITUDE VIS-A-VIS THE GVN AND PRG.

4. BOGAARS SAID THEIR ATTITUDE HAD NOT CHANGED. THE GOS RECOGNIZES THE GMV AND WOULD OPPOSE ANY EFFORT TO OUST IT FROM WMO OR ANY OTHER INTERNATIONAL BODY, BUT ON QUESTION OF SEATING PRG IN INTERNATIONAL BODIES THE GOS HAS CONSISTENTLY ABSTAINED OR NOT VOTED. HE THOUGHT THEY WOULD PROBABLY DO THE SAME IN CONNECTION WITH THE WMO POSTAL BALLOT, BUT MATTER HAD TO BE DECIDED BY CABINET. HE SAID IT IS IN SINGAPORE'S NATIONAL INTEREST NOT TO "SLAP THESE CHAPS (THE PRG) IN THE FACE PUBLICLY, FOR WHO KNOWS THEY MAY IN FACT BE THE GOVERNMENT SOME DAY AND WE WILL HAVE TO LIVE WITH THEM". WE ONLY RECOGNIZE THE GOVERNMENT IN SITU AS THE GOVERNMENT IN POWER, HE SAID, IRRESPECTIVE OF ITS IDEOLOGY (AS MINISTER BARKER HAD STATED IN PARLIAMENT YESTERDAY) AND IN THIS INSTANCE THEY RECOGNIZE THE GVN AND NOT THE PRG. BUT, HE SAID, RECOGNITION IS NOT AT ISSUE HERE, ONLY WHETHER THE PRG REPRESENTATIVES WILL BE PERMITTED TO SIT IN ON A MEETING IN GENEVA AND, ON THAT, THE GOS DID NOT REALLY CARE. I STRESSED OVER AND OVER AGAIN THAT THE PRG IS SEEKING INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION AS A GOVERNMENT IN THESE INTERNATIONAL BODIES AND THAT IT MATTERS A LOT, TO US AND I HOPED TO THE GOS, WHETHER THE PRG WAS TO GAIN RECOGNITION IN THIS WAY. HE REPLIED THAT WHAT REALLY MATTERED WAS WHAT HAPPENED INSIDE VIETNAM ITSELF AND PERHAPS IN THE U.S. CONGRESS. VOTES IN INTERNATIONAL BODIES WOULD HAVE NO REAL EFFECT ON THE SITUATION.

5. I REFERRED TO WHAT I HAD CONSIDERED CLEAR INDICATIONS OF GOS'S INTENTION TO VOTE AGAINST SEATING OF THE PRG AT WMO MEETING IN MY SESSION WITH RAJARATNAM ON JANUARY 27 (REF C) AND WONDERED WHY THEY HAD CHANGED THEIR VIEW. HEHOAS SURPRISED BY THAT AND SAID MINUTE OF MEETING ONLY SAID THAT RAJARATNAM HAD TOLD ME THEY WOULD HAVE TO DECIDE QUESTION IN CABINET. I SAID THERE WAS NO QUESTION IN MY MIND WHAT THE MINISTER HAD SAID -- THIS COULD BE VERIFIED BY MY DCM AND THE MINUTE-TAKER -- BUT BOGAARS INSISTED THAT THIS WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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NOT RECORDED (IT IS, OF COURSE, QUITE POSSIBLE THAT THIS WAS NOT INCLUDED IN THEIR RECORD BECAUSE RAJARATNAM HAD LATER DECIDED HE HAD GONE TOO FAR).

6. I ALSO REFERRED TO PM LEE'S REPEATED STATEMENTS IN MY PRESENCE OF IMPORTANCE OF KEEPING NON-COMMUNIST GOVERNMENT IN POWER IN SOUTH VIETNAM AND SAID IT WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH THIS ATTITUDE TO VOTE AGAINST THE PRG IN WMO. BOGAARS RESPONDED BY SAYING THAT THE

GOS WOULD RECOGNIZE ANY GOVERNMENT THAT IS IN POWER REGARDLESS OF IDEOLOGY AND THAT THEY DON'T TAKE SIDES IN INTERNAL DISPUTES. I COULD NOT DRAW HIM INTO A DISCUSSION OF WHETHER THE KIND OF GOVERNMENT

IN POWER IN SOUTH VIETNAM WAS A MATTER OF INDIFFERENCE TO THE GOS. HE RESPONDED ONLY BY SAYING THAT THE KIND OF GOVERNMENT IN VIETNAM OR ANY OTHER COUNTRY WAS NOT A MATTER THE GOS COULD INFLUENCE IN ANY WAY. THEY WILL DEAL WITH WHOMEVER IS IN POWER.

7. I POINTED OUT THE INCONSISTENCY IN THE GOS POSITION. ON ONE HAND THE GOS SAYS THE ONLY LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH VIETNAM IS THE GVN, BUT IN INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS THEY APPARENTLY WOULD NOT OBJECT TO TWO SO-CALLED GOVERNMENTS ATTENDING. IF THEY RECOGNIZE THE GVN, HOW COULD THEY PERMIT THE OTHER SIDE TO BE RECOGNIZED AS A PARTICIPANT AND THEREBY GAIN A DEGREE OF LEGITIMACY AS A GOVERNMENT.

HE SQUIRMED A BIT OVER THAT BUT MADE NO REAL RESPONSE.

8. I THINK I MADE A SLIGHT DENT ON BOGAARS THINKING AND, IN ANY CASE, HE REALIZES THAT WE TAKE A MOST SERIOUS VIEW OF THIS MATTER. HE PROMISED TO CONVEY THE STRENGTH OF OUR VIEWS AND THE SUBSTANCE OF OUR CONVERSATION TO MINISTER BARKER WHO WILL THEN PRESENT

ISSUE TO CABINET, PROBABLY TOMORROW. MY OWN ASSESSMENT, HOWEVER, IS THAT THE VIEWS OF THE PROFESSIONALS WILL PREVAIL AND THAT THE GOS WILL ABSTAIN OR FAIL TO VOTE. CRONK

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## Message Attributes

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